

July 18, 2007

MEMORANDUM TO THE GOVERNOR

FROM: Jim Perry and Buddy Bynum

RE: Thoughts on the Fair Speech

Goals:

1. Fire up the activists in the crowd. Eaves will speak right before you and will undoubtedly make many personal attacks. Your supporters need to know you're not going to take that lying down.
2. Establish that you have been working to deliver on the promises you made four years ago. With strong leadership, we are getting results.
3. Be humble. We're moving forward, but you know there is more that we need to do. There are lots of issues that can't be solved overnight, but you have a vision and a plan for the future. You have demonstrated that you can get results. You want to build on the record of the last four years to tackle other problems.
4. Close by offering hope for a better future by reminding them that the world is looking at us differently after Katrina. It's time to seize the moment.
5. Capitalize on new opportunities for economic growth to provide good jobs that will keep our sons and daughters in Mississippi.

A suggested outline:

Start by introducing Marsha while the crowd is on its feet.

- I. Respond to Eaves in a way that dismisses him and fires up the audience.

What did y'all think of John Arthur's speech? (Crowd boos.)

When you were looking at him, did it remind you of the back of a phone book?

I heard him talking a lot about “moneychangers.” If we tried to pay for all the things he’s been talking about, he’ll be changing your money into the government’s money pretty quick.

II. Contrast your reason for running for Governor (offering strong leadership to tackle tough problems) with Eaves’ reasons (without mentioning Eaves directly)

When I ran for Governor four years ago, I stood on this stage and said that with strong leadership, we can do better. And in many areas, we are doing better.

Four years ago, we were in the midst of a health care crisis caused by lawsuit abuse. After passing the most comprehensive tort reform bill in the country, doctors aren’t fleeing the state anymore and costs are down for small businesses.

Four years ago, we had lost 38,000 jobs. For every one job that was added, we lost two. By ending lawsuit abuse, not raising taxes, improving workforce training, and changing how we recruit businesses, we have flipped that around – despite enduring the worst natural disaster in American history, 40,000 more people are working today than four years ago.

Four years ago, the state budget was in the worst mess since the depression. Since then, we’ve dug out of a \$720 million budget hole without raising anybody’s taxes.

And we balanced our budget while taking care of our priorities.

We have provided the largest increase in funding for K-12 in state history - \$531 million. We have increased our teacher’s pay by more than 20% - on average, teachers are now earning more than \$42,000 a year. And we’re making reforms so we can get better results for the money we spend.

We have dramatically increased state support for higher education. Including more than doubling funding for workforce training, state support for our community colleges is up 52%. State support for our universities is up 32%.

We balanced our budget by getting control spending and by reforming state government.

We instituted the best anti-fraud program in the nation for Medicaid. We're now requiring people to come in once a year to re-check their eligibility face-to-face. We can't afford to take care of the truly needy the way we should if we're giving free health care to people that could afford it themselves.

We have given state law enforcement back-to-back record pay raises while giving law enforcement at all levels of government new tools to fight crime. And to help them, I signed legislation to make it clear that you have the right to defend yourself if someone breaks into your home.

We enacted new pro-life legislation and now the national right-to-life organization Americans United for Life calls Mississippi the safest place in America for an unborn child.

III. Be humble. Show that you know there's more we need to do.

We're making lots of progress and I'm proud of that. But I know there's more to do. With strong leadership, there's no problem we can't overcome working together.

I know that for too many Mississippians, a pay raise goes straight to increased health care costs for your family.

Some areas need extra help in creating more and better jobs so you're kids have a chance to stay close to home.

We need to keep on reforming our schools so we can get better results. Too many kids dropout, hurting their chances for success.

We've moved more than 30,000 families out of FEMA trailers on the Gulf Coast – a big job done in record time – but thousands more need a

permanent home. We're implementing unprecedented recovery programs to rebuild the coast bigger and better than ever, but there's more we can do.

IV. We can tackle these problems. Raise expectations.

I'm running for Governor again because I'm confident we can tackle these and other challenges. We are moving forward, and with strong leadership and working together, we can make a better future for all of Mississippi.

(From your State of the State):

Katrina revealed to the world and to ourselves the character and spirit of Mississippians. That revelation creates unprecedented opportunity for us and our state... opportunity for job creation and economic prosperity... for a better quality of life for our people . . .for greater, more widely spread equity that at any other time in our history.

Our children and grandchildren can, indeed will, have far more opportunity than my generation ever dreamed of . . .if we seize this moment. Now is the time to raise our expectations for Mississippi and to lift our horizons for our communities, not just for the Coast or South Mississippi, but for all of Mississippi.

I ask you for your vote next week and this November. I ask you to join me in working together to see that we seize this moment and grasp the opportunity we have been provided. Thank you. God bless you all.